



News from the

American College of Surgeons

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**AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS  
COMMITTEE ON TRAUMA  
VERIFICATION/CONSULTATION PROGRAM FOR HOSPITALS  
Information Sheet**

**What is the Committee on Trauma?**

The Committee on Trauma (COT), a standing committee of the American College of Surgeons (ACS), works to improve all phases of the management of the injured patient and to prevent injuries before they occur. The COT promotes leadership and cooperation of all participants in a trauma center so that the best possible care will be provided to injured patients. The COT also requires the commitment of each facility's surgeons to the improvement of trauma care. Recognizing that trauma is a surgical disease that demands surgical leadership, the ACS established the Committee on Trauma, its oldest standing committee, in 1922.

**What is the Verification/Consultation Program for Hospitals?**

Established by the ACS Committee on Trauma in 1987, the Verification/Consultation Program is designed to promote the development of trauma centers in which participants provide the hospital resources necessary to address the trauma needs of *all* injured patients. The Consultation Program is designed to help hospitals and their personnel prepare for this endeavor. The Verification Program confirms that all the criteria have been met.

**What is *Resources for Optimal Care of the Injured Patient*?**

This document is the resource manual of the COT. First published in 1976 as *Optimal Hospital Resources for Care of the Injured Patient*, the manual established guidelines for the care of injured patients. Subsequent revisions have continued the COT's commitment to ensuring that resources and personnel for providing optimal care for injured patients are in place in trauma programs. In 1990, the name of this manual was changed to *Resources for Optimal Care of the Injured Patient* to reflect a change in trauma care and to complement an important and abiding principle of the Committee on Trauma: *To ensure that the needs of all injured patients are addressed wherever they are injured and wherever they receive care.*

### **How did the verification program begin?**

An obvious outgrowth of the establishment of the COT's guidelines for optimal care was the development of a verification process through which a hospital could be evaluated by ACS trauma surgeons to determine whether the criteria for optimal care of injured patients were being met. Thus, the Verification/Consultation Program for Hospitals was established in 1987.

### **How many categories of verification does the program have?**

There are four separate categories of verification in the COT's program (Level I, II, III, and IV), each with specific criteria that must be met by a facility seeking that level of verification.

### **How does a hospital or clinic receive verification?**

The level of verification is requested by the hospital. An on-site review of the hospital is conducted by a team of surgeons experienced in the field of trauma. Using the current *Resources for Optimal Care of the Injured Patient* manual as a guideline, this team will determine if the criteria for the requested level have been met.